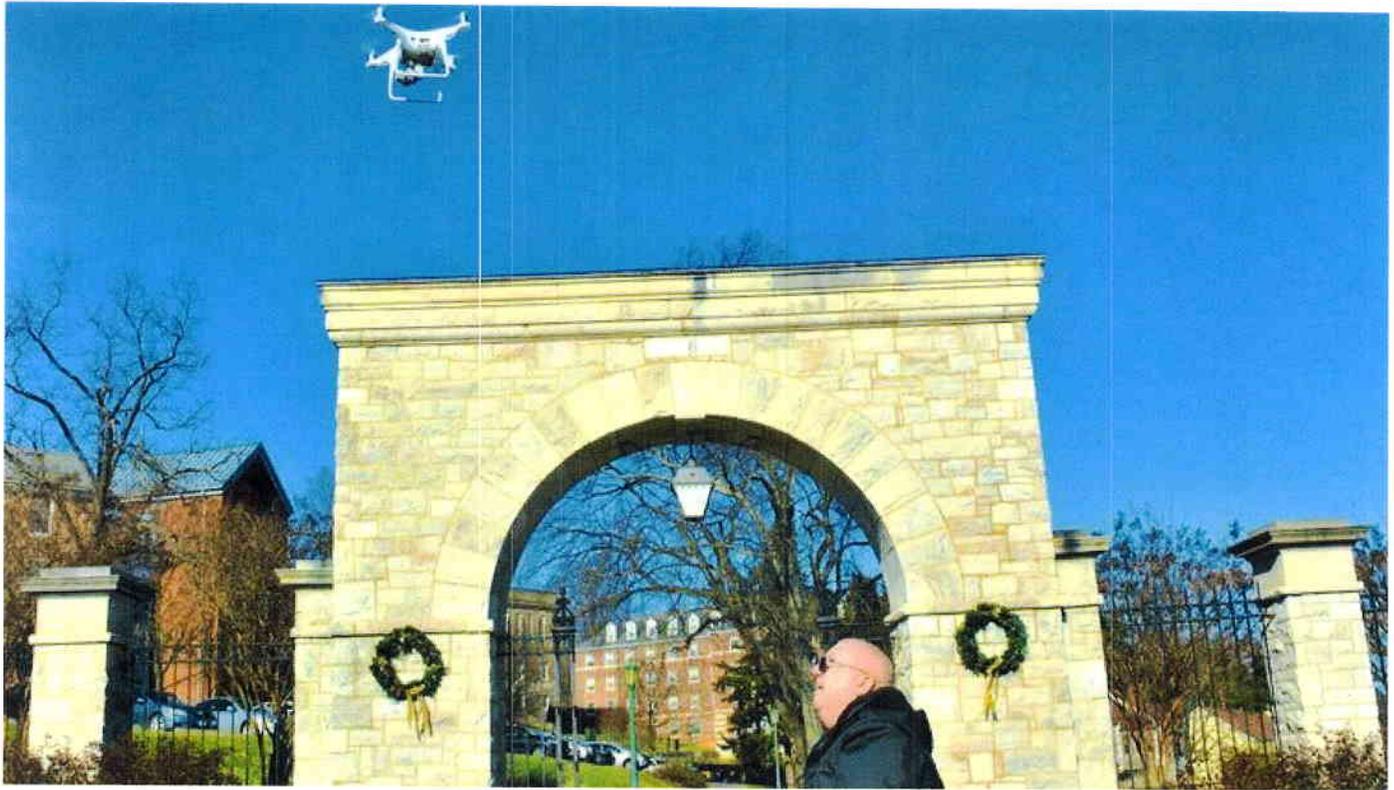


An Eye for Art: For John Hale, drone photography is 'fun, challenging'



John Hale, of Taneytown, uses drones to take photographs. He obtained his license to fly drones by taking classes at Carroll Community College. (Courtesy photo)



By **Lyndi McNulty**
An Eye For Art

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John Hale is a drone photographer living in Taneytown. He has been an amateur photographer his entire life. He took photographs for the yearbook when he attended Brunswick High School. Hale has taken thousands of photographs during his travels for business over the years.

Hale likes to take photographs of architectural items, landscapes and events.

He and his wife Joan also had a graphic design business called e-Media Services when the internet was in its infancy. They have run that business for 18 years. Hale purchased some high-end photography equipment for his business, mostly Canon.

Currently, Hale is a real estate agent for Coldwell Banker in Westminster. In that role, he noticed an increasing use of aerial photography for real estate listings. He decided to purchase a drone to take photographs until he found out that was not legal. When doing research, Hale learned that to legally do drone photography for commercial purposes you must be licensed by the [Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\)](#).

The word drone is a nickname for Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV). They are also referred to as UAS, Unmanned Aerial Systems. The history of drones extends back to 1849. Austrian soldiers filled balloons with explosives and used them to attack Venice. These were the first UAVs. Unfortunately, in some cases, the wind changed direction and the Austrians bombed themselves! As a result, these UAVs did not catch on.

According to [dronenthusiast.com](#), it was not until after the first successful flight by the Wright Brothers in 1900, that the Ruston Proctor Aerial Target was invented by the British in 1916. It was the first drone but certainly not as sophisticated as the ones used today.

Hale decided to pursue getting a license to fly a drone. To get a license he took classes at Carroll Community College and participated in both ground and flight school. Once he spent the time and expense, Hale decided to offer his services to other real estate agents or anyone who needs commercial/industrial applications.

The experience of being both a real estate agent and knowing the market and client needs makes him a good choice for this profession. He can also do photograph alterations when needed. His business is called Hale Photo Services, LLC.

The aerial photography can show prospective buyers a bird's eye view of neighboring properties, adjacent features, and proximity to roads, schools, recreation, topography and businesses. For a large piece of property, it is almost mandatory.

Hale also does both videography and stills at the same time, including panoramas. He can also get camera shots of a structure that could not be seen from the ground. The drone can reach a height of 400 feet and can view for miles.

"This is such an infinitesimal part of what is going on in the drone industry. They are used for agriculture, industrial, utility inspections, infrastructure inspections, home inspections, search and rescue, emergency deliveries, disaster surveys and response, check on wild fire and flood damage. A railroad can inspect miles and miles of track. Drones are also used for security, police work and military applications. Cinematic uses are endless, and the drones can go places that other vehicles can't," Hale explained.

The videos and still photographs are also immediately available. Using a UAV reduces the cost and expense by having an unmanned vehicle. Using airplanes and helicopters are much more expensive.

"It is fun, challenging and improves client experience and enhances public home searchers' ability to preview a property," Hale said.

The quality of the photographs and videos is extremely high.

Hale related a story while working with his new drone.

“A couple of weeks ago we finally had weather decent enough to fly in, so I went to Taneytown Memorial Park and flew up to the 400-foot mark and took a look around,” he recalled. “Before long, I received an inexplicable alarm and noticed a disturbance that caused my front right propeller to dip into the frame of view (at 1:47 on the time line). Then, totally unprovoked, I spotted an attack vulture in the upper right-hand corner, just below the horizon (at 2:00). Two seconds later this wing bird showed himself and they circled for the kill. Since I was outnumbered, outsized, and outweighed — that doesn't happen very often — I made a hasty retreat.

“Happily, I escaped without any damages.”

For more information, go to www.halephotoservices.com and www.uav.photos. Hale can be reached at 301-310-3345.

Lyndi McNulty is the owner of Gizmos Art in Westminster. Her column appears on the first and third Thursday of each month.

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